



# NORTH PLAINS OUTREACH WORKSHOP ON HOUSING DESIGN

FINAL MEMO MARCH 2018

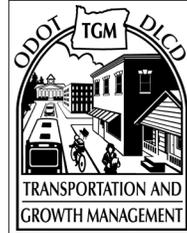


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This project is partially funded by a grant from the Transportation and Growth Management ("TGM") Program, a joint program of the Oregon Department of Transportation and the Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development. This TGM grant is financed, in part, by federal Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST-Act), local government, and the State of Oregon funds.

The contents of this document do not necessarily reflect views or policies of the State of Oregon.

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Cover Image: Juniper Garden Apartments in Forest Grove, Oregon. Designed by Scott Edwards Architecture.

## Executive Summary

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In 2017, thanks to Transportation Growth Management (TGM) grant, the City of North Plains conducted a series of workshops to help the community learn about and discuss options for new, higher density housing. This document summarizes the year-long project, describes the issues, and details a series of zoning code changes that respond directly to the community feedback. The recommended zoning code changes are intended to encourage more housing that people like, provide housing types that are missing in the community, respond to changing demographics, and correct certain design issues. By doing all these things, the proposed changes will help implement the 2035 North Plains Vision.

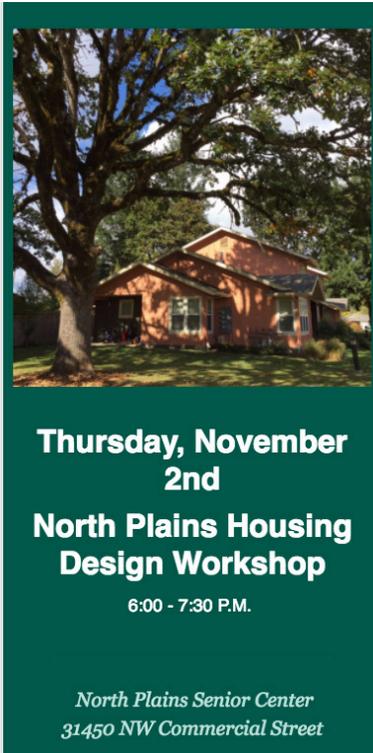
Over the last two decades, development pressure arrived in North Plains in the form of residential development on infill sites within the R-2.5 zones, typically many units at one time. When a large number of new units arrive all at once in a community of a few thousand residents, results can be disruptive. In addition to the number of dwellings and the lack of diversity, there were design details that people had strong feelings about—positive and negative.

The zoning code assessment attempts to address the design details, but also pinpoints a major issue, caused by several zoning code problems acting in concert: While the zoning code permits a range of housing types, when they are subjected to the review procedures, parking requirements, minimum lot sizes and other requirements, dwellings such as apartments are not feasible to build. In other words, a dwelling type or use may be permitted, and marked with a capital “P” in the land use table, but that does not mean it will be developed, even if it is popular, fulfills market demand, and there is land available. Meanwhile, larger new development on the northeast and southwest edges of North Plains are allowed more flexible zoning provisions, but these provisions are complicated and can be undertaken only by major homebuilder-developers. Without amendments to fix these problems, North Plains will be unable to achieve the 2035 Vision.

Zoning code recommendations are aimed at fixing the problems described above, but also respond to local values that emerged in conversations with the community, and which are embedded in the 2035 Vision: Identify locally-appropriate strategies for incorporating more diverse housing types; reflect the historic form and scale of the community, promote strategic, gentle change, and take care to fit new development into existing neighborhoods.

# Introduction and Background

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Poster for public workshop, held on Thursday, November 2nd 2017.

In 2017, the City of North Plains received Transportation Growth Management (TGM) assistance to conduct a series of small conversations leading to a public workshop, focused on housing designs for the future, designed to meet the needs of its citizens and families, including children and grandchildren, in North Plains.

A number of meetings and presentations took place between August and November of 2017. The project team interviewed developers, planning commissioners and city councilors. Two focus groups were conducted with local residents. A public workshop was held on November 2nd, 2017. In addition, a survey, was posted to the City website to solicit additional feedback on housing design from North Plains residents. Both the workshop and the survey were announced by mail through the City's newsletter that goes out with the water bill to each resident. A summary of these efforts was presented to City Council in November 2017.

## PROJECT OBJECTIVE

The objective of the project, called **Outreach Workshop on Housing Design for the City of North Plains**, is to help the local community learn about and discuss the options for building and site design of new, higher density housing. Better designed higher-density housing can lead to a more diverse, connected and cohesive community. Higher density, compact development supports transportation choices in the community. The project may inform future zoning code amendments, but zoning code amendments are not part of this project. Specific outcomes for the project are:

- » Educate the public on different types of higher density housing and its benefits.
- » Develop strategies for increasing the amount of higher density housing that meets community needs.

## CONTEXT

The City currently has almost 3,000 residents, and is facing growth pressures. For decades, North Plains has served as a home for several specialty manufacturers, including wood products companies and steel fabricators. However, most manufacturing company employees commute from locales outside the City with less expensive housing. Most residents work for technology companies outside the City in other Washington County cities, such as Hillsboro.

The pressure for more housing in proximity to Hillsboro employers led to several housing developments in the City in the 2000s and 2010s. These developments met with mixed reception by existing residents due to parking design, underused pocket parks, poor visual appeal, and code-conforming house details that served little purpose. Additional housing projects continue to be developed, both on the western and northern edges of the City and on properties just east of Glencoe Road.

While there are some infill projects moving forward, master planning and development of two significant areas is underway: the “East Expansion Area” and the “North Expansion Area.” These areas are expected to be developed within the next fifteen years.

The City, city leaders, and residents are interested in considering code amendments that could encourage well-designed higher density development to implement the 2035 North Plains Vision.

### 2035 NORTH PLAINS VISION

The City has adopted the 2035 North Plains Vision. The stated vision is to maintain “a small town character while accommodating current and future residents.” Specific relevant goals include:

- » There is a range of quality housing for all ages and income levels.
- » Housing is attractive and compatible and builds upon historic North Plains patterns.
- » Land uses and housing types transition cohesively among neighborhoods.
- » North Plains is a well-planned and connected city where residents and visitors enjoy pedestrian and bicycle paths between neighborhoods and to downtown.

The aim is to develop positive models for housing at densities that provide multiple community benefits, including supporting taking more trips by walking and biking, reducing reliance on the automobile, boosting downtown businesses, and providing a mix of housing to serve residents at a broad range of income levels.

### DEMOGRAPHIC OVERVIEW

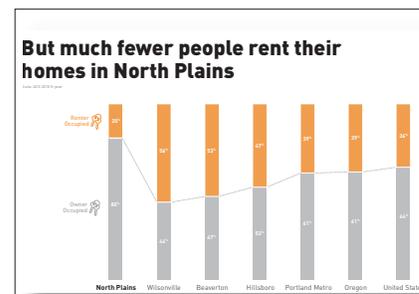
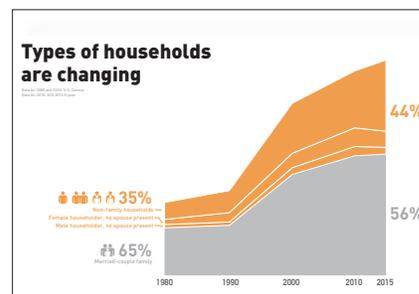
American Community Survey information was collected about North Plains residents including median age, sex, race and ethnicity, income, commute time and mode, and education. Dwelling unit information included ownership, type and tenure. Other cities were studied for comparison: Hillsboro, Beaverton, Banks and Wilsonville.

The City of North Plains is a small community of around 3,000 residents. It is made up of approximately 50-50 percent men and women, with a median age of 37. In comparison with other neighboring communities (with the exception of Banks) North Plains is largely homogenous: 79% of the population is white, 0% African American, 12.5% Hispanic or Latino and 2.5% Asian.

The data show that the community and the region as a whole have been growing rapidly, particularly between 2000 to 2014. Over 35% of the North Plains population moved in between 2000 and 2009, with another 31.5% moving in between 2010 and 2014. The majority of new residents have been moving into owner-occupied homes as opposed to rentals (due to the shortage of rentals). North Plains is 80% owner occupied as is Banks. Data collected for the other areas show a much lower percentage of home ownership ranging from 44 – 64%.



North Plains 2035 Vision



Graphics based on recent local, regional and national demographics information.

Household type in North Plains is roughly 67% family and 33% non-family.<sup>1</sup> This is consistent with the region as a whole, with the exception of Banks, which is made up of 84% family households. Just over half of the North Plains population is a married-couple family, with just under half consisting of single family households and non-family households, including people living alone.

North Plains has the second highest median household income at just over \$72,000 followed by Hillsboro with a median household income of almost \$68,000.

### **Growing More Diverse**

Certain demographic data was collected to study how North Plains has changed over time. Race and ethnicity over time shows that North Plains is becoming more diverse. In 2000 the population was just over 10% non-white and in 2015 the population was 20% non-white. Family households are on the decline, while non-family households are growing. In 1980 there were almost 80% family households, while in 2015 family households made up under 70%. Data was also collected to understand owner occupied versus renter occupied units over time. Between 1980 and 2010 the numbers stayed roughly the same, with owner-occupied units making up approximately 75% of overall occupancy. In 2015, however, owner-occupied units increased to 80%, leaving just 20% renter occupied units.

### **WHAT IT MEANS FOR HOUSING IN NORTH PLAINS**

North Plains is growing in size and it is also changing demographically.

All new units built in North Plains between 2005 and 2016 are single-family residential, no new multifamily or single-family attached units were built during this time period (North Plains Housing Needs Analysis, Draft Report, May 2017).

### **Current Housing Doesn't Meet Community Needs**

The housing being built, which is all single family residential, is not meeting the diverse needs of residents overall. Family households are on the decline but the availability of housing types that might meet non-family household needs, including apartments and townhomes, is extremely limited or non-existent.

The types of households in North Plains are similar to the region. Yet, North Plains has drastically fewer people who rent their homes than compared with the rest of the region. Just 20% are renters in North Plains, while in Wilsonville, Beaverton and Hillsboro, renters make up around 50% of the population.

### **What We Heard from the Community**

Residents have differing views on the growth of North Plains. Some residents want to see more single dwelling homes with larger lots. They aren't interested in apartments of any kind and are concerned about any increase in density. Those skeptical about growth were unhappy with recent developments, don't

*"North Plains is divided: there's the old part of town and the new parts of town. People moving into those areas have different ideas about livability. I would like to see the two areas grow together, since everyone is a part of the same community."*

--North Plains Resident

*"There should be more diversity in the types of housing in a neighborhood and in our community. Since we aren't all alike, it would make sense that our housing would be different too."*

--North Plains Resident

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<sup>1</sup> The Census Bureau defines "family" as a group of two people or more related by birth, marriage, or adoption and residing together. A "nonfamily" household consists of a householder living alone (a one-person household) or where the householder shares the home exclusively with people to whom he/she is not related.

want to see any dwellings taller than 2-story and generally wish to keep their community small and maintain its rural character.

In contrast to this anti-growth view, some residents are interested in expanding housing and density in North Plains. These residents are happy to see new developments but want improved design (such as fixing parking problems). They would like to see apartments, including townhomes and 2-3 story multi-dwelling homes. They want to have a better mix of housing types next to each other and more options for seniors, such as single-level homes and accessory dwelling units (ADUs). Most agreed that the new developments brought better conditions for biking and walking, including sidewalks, street lights and landscaping.

In addition to conversations about density, participants were looking for more information, as listed below. While these topics were not the focus of this project, we covered them briefly in our workshops; see Appendix E for details on the information we compiled.

- » Historic North Plains character
- » Examples of sensitive infill that people can develop themselves (like ADUs)
- » What does affordability mean for North Plains?
- » What amount of development would be needed to support a grocery store?

## EXISTING HOUSING

On a site tour hosted by the City, the project team visited four developments in R2.5 and Neighborhood Community (NC) zones built within the past ten years. In addition to recent homes, the team also visited the only two multi-dwelling units in North Plains, which are both senior housing developments, though not recently built. These developments were further reviewed to understand block size, typical lot size, number of units, type of dwelling and zoning.

## Site Tour Observations

The project team noted certain issues during the site tour. We organized these into one of three categories: parking, building design, and site design.

### Issue: Parking

- » New development is exclusively single family homes. Each home has its own double car parking garage. Lots are narrow, and space between units isn't usable. A related issue, due to narrowness of lots, is created by the number and width of curb cuts for each garage: Very little parallel parking exists because of the frequent curb cuts.
- » Generally, where and how people park their cars is causing other problems; at times encroaching on the sidewalk because the length of the vehicle is longer than the driveway. People aren't parking their cars in their garages, which causes problems for those trying to use the sidewalks.

### Issue: Design

- » The garage facades are closest to sidewalk, while main entrances to homes are recessed.
- » Narrow side yard spaces create awkward, unusable areas.
- » Dwelling units are all the same size and design.

## Developments Assessed

- » *Senior Plaza*
- » *Highland Court Apartments*
- » *McKay Fields*
- » *Kemmer Meadows*
- » *Sunset Ridge*
- » *Sunset Terrace*



Recent North Plains developments have varying degrees of amenities for pedestrians including sidewalks and street trees (upper) or no sidewalks and minimal space for on street parking (lower).

- » Overall there is a lack of multi-dwelling developments.

**Issue: Site Design**

- » Orientation to public spaces; buildings turn their backs to pocket parks.
- » Narrow alleys discourage some people from parking in back because they are not using their garages to park their cars and the alley driveways are shorter than the length of a car.
- » The space between curb cuts is insufficient to accommodate on-street parking or street trees; in some cases there is no street tree planting zone.

# Conclusions

## DEVELOPMENT ASSESSMENT

Significant developments built within the past 10 years were assessed based on the North Plains Vision stated goals for the community:

### Provide a range of quality housing for all ages and income levels.

**Housing built in R 2.5 infill sites.** New homes on infill sites do not meet this goal by themselves. Homes are homogeneous, within the same price range, and out of the price range of low-income residents. Homes do not accommodate seniors who may need a single level home.

**Housing built in the Neighborhood Community (NC) zone of the East Expansion Area.** In the NC zone, there is more housing mix, and more variation in home sizes and lots. Yet the majority of housing is detached single dwellings. Future development of this area will include a number of single level homes with seniors in mind.

### Housing is attractive, compatible and builds upon historic North Plains' patterns.

**R 2.5 infill sites.** Many project participants referred to these homes as “cookie cutter” or “bread loaf” homes because of their tall, skinny form with minimal, unusable side-yard space. Homes’ street presence is dominated by garages and recessed entries. The close spacing of homes and driveways creates very little space for on-street parking.

### Neighborhood Community (NC) zone of the East Expansion Area.

Compared with the infill sites, the NC sites provide more variation in housing forms, and the variety gives the neighborhood a more organic feel. Homes are alley-loaded, similar to historical homes in North Plains. Alley access provides more on-street parking and front porches on the street-side of lots. The narrow alley frustrates some, because residents park their cars in their driveways rather than in their garages.

### Housing transitions cohesively among neighborhoods.

**R 2.5 infill sites.** Infill sites are self-contained neighborhoods with little transition between older developments. In some cases, older homes are interspersed through new developments, providing some variation and transition between types.

### Neighborhood Community (NC) zone of the East Expansion Area.

Development is fairly self-contained, though ample parks at different scales give a more graceful transition between neighborhoods.

### Housing is part of a well-planned and connected city.

**R 2.5 infill sites.** New developments have pedestrian and bicycle amenities such as sidewalks and street lights. Wide and frequent driveways frequently interrupt the sidewalk, compromising the walking experience and safety for pedestrians.

### Neighborhood Community (NC) zone of the East Expansion Area.

With alleys and garages in the rear, the sidewalk experience is generally high quality. Frequent street trees, parks and natural stormwater management enhance the pedestrian realm.

## North Plains Vision and Goals for the Community:

- » *Provides a range of quality housing for all ages and income levels.*
- » *Housing is attractive, compatible and builds upon historic North Plains' patterns.*
- » *Transitions cohesively among neighborhoods.*
- » *Part of a well-planned and connected city where residents and visitors enjoy pedestrian and bicycle paths between neighborhoods and to downtown.*

*The development assessment found that projects within the NC zone performed higher on all objectives than did projects in the R-2.5 zone.*

*“At their best, PUDs are used for truly innovative developments by thoughtful builders who offer quality in return for flexibility... At their worst... they are used because it is easier to negotiate case-by-case deals than to fix the problems with the underlying Euclidean zoning ordinance. Planners know that the setbacks are wrong or that the parking standards are... too high, but there is no political will to fix the problems in the zoning ordinance.”*

–Donald L. Elliott, FAICP, “A Better Way to Zone: Ten Principles to Create More Livable Cities”



There is only one apartment development in North Plains, Senior Plaza, built in the downtown commercial zone. Notably, it is not in a residential zone.

## ZONING CODE ASSESSMENT

The project team performed a zoning code assessment to determine how North Plains land use zoning and other development regulations could better provide for the vision, people’s preferences, and demographic shifts. Below are big picture results of the code assessment, and recommendations to improve the zoning code.

### NC Master Plan and Planned Unit Development provisions

The comparison on page 7 of this report, of recent projects in the NC and R-2.5 zones, indicates that the NC (Neighborhood Community) zone produces development that consistently meets more of the community objectives. This is mostly because the NC Master Plan process provides flexibility for dimensional standards (lot sizes and setbacks), and permits a variety of housing to be mixed together in neighborhoods. While generally reaching more of the goals, the NC is a very burdensome process, and not available for small infill projects. It requires a Master Plan process that complies with Planned Unit Development provisions, and is a negotiated approval for projects over 4 acres in size.

### Renting in North Plains

The option of renting a home or apartment in North Plains is rare or non-existent. There is only one apartment development in North Plains, Senior Plaza, is built in the downtown commercial zone (notably not in a residential zone). This is in spite of the fact that North Plains is growing in size and is also changing demographically. Household sizes are shrinking in North Plains, as they are all over the region and the country. Surprisingly, rentals and units that would serve these smaller households are not being built in North Plains. Of all new units built in North Plains between 2005 and 2016, no new multifamily units were built. The vast majority of housing promoted by North Plains zoning are single dwellings, in two flavors: they are permitted to be either detached or attached. Due to a side yard requirement in the R-2.5 zone, many are not quite attached.

The dearth of rental construction is probably due to the zoning barriers that prevent apartment development. Apartments are flats within a single building (or multiple buildings), on a single lot or parcel. Of the residential zones that currently exist, the only zones where apartment buildings are permitted are NC and R-2.5. However, in each zone they are subject to design review; in NC to the Master Plan PUD, and in R-2.5, subject to Design Review provisions of 16.175. In other words, apartment buildings are not permitted “by-right” in any zone.

During workshops for this project, attendees liked the idea of house-like apartment structures which would fit into neighborhoods (see Four- to eight-plexes, or “Neighborhood Apartments,” below). This housing type was shown as an example of multi-unit structure that would be compatible with North Plains historical patterns. One attendee fondly recalled living at one time in just such an apartment. It was in a converted old house.

In order for these types of housing units to be built, multi-dwelling structures would have to be a permitted use in residential zones.

One recommendation for encouraging more of the housing types that workshop attendees preferred is to disaggregate housing type from permitted use. Instead, focus on the size and shape of housing. Whether the structure is compatible with surrounding neighborhood would be more important than whether it accommodates multiple or single units. This is a more form based code approach, and one promoted by “missing middle” proponents (see Strategies, page 13).

### **R-2.5 side yards**

Attached single dwellings, or rowhouses, typically share a sidewall with the neighboring dwelling. Many of the rowhouses built in the R-2.5 zone are not quite attached, due to a requirement that side yards comply with fire code separation. Side yards are very narrow, and are not useable as yards (McKay Fields, Kemmer Meadow, and Wascoe Street Development).

### **By-right housing types**

Another approach would continue to regulate housing types by zone, but would ensure that there are multiple housing types permitted by right in every zone. A code amendment effort would focus on making sure that the use standards, dimensional and development standards promotes the housing types desired by the community.

During the interviews and workshops, attendees expressed a desire for the following types of housing in North Plains: small “cottages,” single-level unit of various kinds (for seniors), and the house-like apartments described above. Attendees were interested in a greater mix of housing within neighborhoods. As one person said, “Since we aren’t all alike, it makes sense that our housing would be different too.”

Specifically, residents expressed interest in three types of rental (and ownership) housing which are not permitted in any zone in North Plains:

- » Cottage clusters
- » Four- to eight-plexes (Neighborhood Apartments)
- » Flat with rowhouse above

Zoning barriers exist for each of these: Cottage clusters need a smaller minimum lot size; Neighborhood Apartments would need to be a permitted use, and the flat with rowhouse above would need a slight increase in the minimum height.

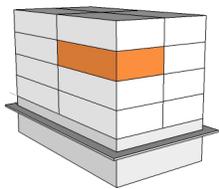
Removing zoning barriers can go a long way to increase the variety of housing, increase options for renting and encourage innovation. In addition to creating more housing choices for North Plains residents, strategic removal of certain barriers can make housing less expensive to develop, which can



Many of the rowhouses built in the R-2.5 zone are not quite attached, due to a requirement that side yards comply with fire code separation.

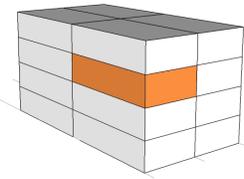


Workshop attendees liked the idea of house-like apartment structures which would fit into neighborhoods, and be compatible with North Plains historic patterns. The photo shows the Mays House, an early North Plains residence.



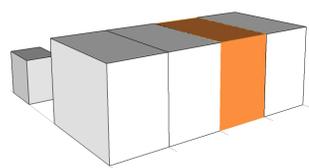
Main Street Apartment Over Retail

Multiple dwellings on one lot located above ground floor commercial uses. Units are typically rented, but are sometimes sold as condominiums.  
Permitted in NC and commercial zones.



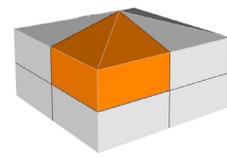
Main Street Apartment

Multiple dwellings on one lot, in the form of stacked flats. Usually in a single building with a shared entrance. Units are typically rented, but are sometimes sold as condominiums.  
Permitted in NC and commercial zones.



Rowhouse Over Flat

Multiple dwellings on one lot, with a rowhouse over a ground level flat. Rental or condominium.  
Not permitted in any North Plains zone.



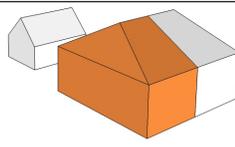
Neighborhood Apartment

Multiple dwellings on one lot, in a house-like building. Commonly called four, six- or eight-plexes. Can be stacked or side-by-side. Rental or condominium.  
Not permitted in any North Plains zone.



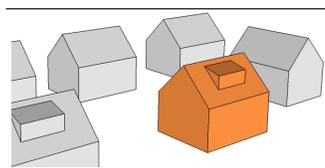
Neighborhood Rowhouse

Single dwelling on one lot, in the form of a fee-simple rowhouse. Usually sold, as opposed to rented.  
Permitted in NC and R-2.5 zones.



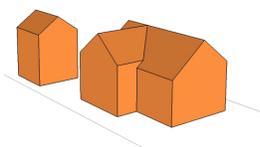
Duplex

Multiple dwellings on one lot (limited to two), stacked or side-by-side. Rental or condominium.  
Permitted in NC and R-2.5 zones.



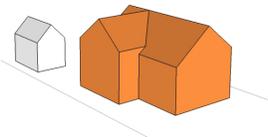
Cottage Cluster

Single dwelling on one lot, in the form of a fee-simple cottage. Parking and common areas are co-owned and managed. Usually sold, as opposed to rented.  
Not permitted in any North Plains zone.



Detached Dwelling with ADU

Multiple dwellings on one lot, limited to two. Detached, or attached unit (in attached garages, basements or attics, for example).  
Permitted in R-2.5 and other residential zones.



Detached Dwelling

Single dwelling on one lot, in the form of a fee-house. Usually sold, but can be rented.  
Permitted in R-2.5 and other residential zones.

translate into more affordable units. Examples of amendments that would remove barriers are described in the table on page 12.

### **Multifamily and Single family residential**

The zoning code should clarify the terms it uses for different types of housing. Terms should focus on the size and arrangement of the unit type (and possibly density), but not on whether it is for a single family or for multiple families. It is important to note that the Census Bureau uses the terms “family” and “nonfamily” and as such, these categories are incorporated into the demographics overview section of this report. However, given the demographic shift in what constitutes a household, the use of the term “family” is outdated.

In addition, the terms single-family and multi-family give very little indication of the legal arrangement, site design, architecture or building size. The visual survey of housing types on page 10 shows that multiple dwellings on one lot can take many forms; some of them are high density, and some are not. Some are very compatible with detached single dwellings. Using the census and legal description for multi-family (more than one dwelling unit on a single lot), a primary dwelling along with an accessory dwelling unit is classified as multi-dwelling. Clear definitions, and consistent use of terms, will help regulate desired housing types.

*“Avoid Minimum Individual Lot Size Requirements: such a standard can hinder the development of compact home clusters (cottage clusters). Consider leaving out lot size minimums all together, instead relying on compliance with other appropriate standards to ensure good design and neighborhood compatibility.”*

--Eli Spevak & Madeline Kovacs,  
“Character-Compatible, Space-Efficient Housing Options for Single-Dwelling Neighborhoods”

# Zoning Code Recommendations and Strategies

Any zoning code amendments project for North Plains should look comprehensively at the entire zoning code and development processes. The items listed below are targeted at achieving the housing objectives. They are examples of tasks that could be undertaken in part (in multiple steps) or together as part of an overall land use and development overhaul.

	Recommendation	Example amendments
Short Term	Fix problems in R-2.5 zone that inadvertently create poor quality development.	Remove the R-2.5 side yard requirement which requires a separation between attached dwellings.
	Make limited, strategic amendments to encourage some of the desired housing types that are <b>currently permitted</b> in R-2.5.	Consider providing relief from certain standards for duplexes on corner lots. For example, reduce the minimum lot size, setbacks and required parking. For accessory dwelling units, remove parking and owner-occupancy requirements.
Mid Term	Conduct code maintenance and minor code cleanup for consistency.	Clean up definitions for dwelling types, and make use of consistent terms for dwelling types between zoning chapters and Definitions chapter. The definitions chapter uses conflicting terms for different legal arrangements, confusing fee-simple and condominium development (multiple units on one lot).  Delete the word "family" in reference to dwelling types.
Long Term	Make limited, strategic amendments to encourage some of the desired housing types that are <b>currently conditional</b> in R-2.5	Consider permitting outright uses which are currently Conditional. An example is the use referred to as "Townhomes/condominiums." A few strategic, minor amendments to dimensional standards would allow locally-appropriate interpretations of the dwelling type, including types which were identified in the Workshop: "Rowhouse over Flat," or "Neighborhood Apartment" (four- to eight-plexes"), See page 8 for details on these desired housing types. See page 9 for information on zoning barriers.
	Conduct a major overhaul to promote the community's vision for a range and mix of housing types throughout North Plains.	Address provisions which act as barriers to desired housing types. For example, Cottage Clusters need a smaller minimum lot size; Neighborhood Apartments would need to be a permitted use, and the flat with rowhouse above would need a slight increase in the minimum height.  Address provisions which act as barriers to a mix of housing types.  Significantly reduce parking requirements and regulations. See page 13 for details on parking strategies.  Test, through 3-D modeling, dimensional and development standards to identify standards that are appropriate to North Plains and promote North Plains character.

## STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE HIGHER DENSITY HOUSING DESIGNS

### Parking

The number of parking spaces that must be accommodated on a development site is the single greatest determinant of the type of housing that can be built. A certain number of parking spaces are typically required by the zoning code. Sometimes the number of parking spaces is pre-determined by the developer's target market and financing. If a community is trying to incentivize a diversity of housing types, a very effective strategy is reducing or eliminating zoning code requirements for parking; instead letting developers determine the amount of parking they can or must build. Any changes to parking requirements should be part of a neighborhood or city-wide parking strategy.

### Form Based Codes

A Form Based Code (FBC) is a type of zoning code that regulates the outside form of buildings—and their relationship to streets and open spaces—as much or more than it regulates the uses inside. FBCs, when created with plenty of community engagement, are better at ensuring that new housing will meet the community vision.

An FBC for North Plains, for example, would ensure that existing and historic North Plains “patterns” were incorporated into new and amended development standards. Lot sizes, platting and building shape would be considered when establishing new development standards.

During the workshops for this project, participants expressed interest in apartment buildings, or four- and six-plexes, that are scaled like large houses and designed to fit into existing neighborhoods. Form based codes are good at specifying and tailoring development codes so they implement the community's vision.

Form based codes involve the public in the drafting of development requirements, therefore, the need for public review of individual projects can be reduced. Ideally, if the public involvement is robust, the new housing types will “by right,” meaning they are approved as easily as a standard single dwelling structure.

### Adapt a model ordinance for a desired type of housing

In 2009, Metro published an “Innovative Design and Development Toolkit” that promoted among other things, more diverse housing types. Included in the toolkit was *Regional Model for Cottage Housing Standards*.

The same year, Wood Village, in east Multnomah County, used Metro's model code to change its development code to allow cottages—houses of 1,200 square feet or less and clustered around a common outdoor space. Although the city was primarily concerned about providing housing options, the code change also doubled the allowable residential density.

Wood Village adopted the ordinance in 2009, and has seen a number of general inquiries, but has not seen any development, perhaps because land where the cottage cluster ordinance applies is zoned Multi-residential MR2 or MR4, and these areas are almost completely built out.

### Examples in Action

- » Portland Parking management toolkit for mixed-use centers and corridors: <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/transportation/article/567030>
- » Metro Innovative Design and Development Toolkit (see pages 53-70) [https://www.oregonmetro.gov/sites/default/files/2014/05/11/design\\_dev\\_codes\\_toolkit.pdf](https://www.oregonmetro.gov/sites/default/files/2014/05/11/design_dev_codes_toolkit.pdf)

### Examples in Action

- » Sacramento County Council of Governments published a handbook for local governments that explain what a form based code is and how to implement it in different types of communities: <https://www.sacog.org/form-based-codes-handbook>

### Examples in Action

- » Metro Innovative Design and Development Toolkit (see pages 40-42) [https://www.oregonmetro.gov/sites/default/files/2014/05/11/design\\_dev\\_codes\\_toolkit.pdf](https://www.oregonmetro.gov/sites/default/files/2014/05/11/design_dev_codes_toolkit.pdf)
- » <https://www.ci.wood-village.or.us/wp-content/uploads/Cottage-Style-Housing-Guide.pdf>

### Articles

- » [http://www.oregonlive.com/environment/index.ssf/2009/12/small\\_houses\\_go\\_big-time.html](http://www.oregonlive.com/environment/index.ssf/2009/12/small_houses_go_big-time.html)

A number of Washington cities have adopted cottage cluster ordinances. The most advanced effort is in Kirkland, Washington. In 2002, the city of Kirkland began an evaluation of cottage housing under its Innovative Housing Demonstration Project Ordinance. One of the two projects featured in the demonstration program was Danielson Grove, an award-winning development known for its architecture, design, and green building standards. The cottage housing project included 16 homes ranging in size from 1 to 3 bedrooms; each situated on a private lot with access to common outdoor areas. The development was well-received by focus groups, citizens, and the development community. In 2007, the city's planning commission confirmed that constructing these developments allowed citizens to see the quality of the development and also visualize the potential for future development. The planning commission adopted an interim ordinance that became the basis of the final ordinance passed into law in November 2007.

### **Encourage certain types of projects, such as Accessory Dwelling Units, through targeted programs**

The City of Portland's ADU ordinance was originally adopted in 1997, however, it was not until about 2010, that property owners began to take advantage of the ordinance great numbers. Now there are about 1,600 ADUs that have been permitted in Portland. Strategic actions taken by the city, in concert with the high-priced housing market, are responsible for the upsurge:

- » Since 2010, System Development Charges have been waived for ADUs.
- » Homeowners typically undertake the planning, financing and construction of an ADU, so Portland provides information geared toward helping nonprofessionals navigate the development process.

### **Promote "missing middle" housing types**

"Missing middle" is a term coined in 2010 to define a range of multi-unit or clustered housing types compatible in scale with single-family homes. The term refers to housing types that used to exist in most towns and cities, such as courtyard apartments or bungalow courts. They are "missing" because they are prohibited by many modern zoning codes and parking requirements. Many of these "old," pre-suburban housing types filled in the gap between apartments and detached single dwellings.

The idea of missing middle housing is very popular as an idea for increasing housing supply and diversity. Portland, Bend, Bainbridge Island, Olympia; Austin, Texas, and cities in Michigan, are among the cities that have hosted workshops and formed committees to discuss integrating missing middle housing types into their cities' housing inventory. Many communities are exploring strategies; a few of these efforts have led to zoning code amendments.

City planners in Muskegon, Michigan, considered reducing minimum lot sizes in order to eliminate an issue which caused historic small lot homes to be non-conforming. Because they had been categorized by zoning as non-conforming (due to nonconforming lot sizes), these homes were unable to get financing for improvements or be approved for insurance coverage.

### **Examples in Action**

- » [https://www.huduser.gov/portal/casestudies/study\\_102011\\_2.html](https://www.huduser.gov/portal/casestudies/study_102011_2.html)

### **Examples in Action**

- » <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/bds/36676>

### **Articles:**

- » [http://www.oregonlive.com/hg/index.ssf/2018/01/adu\\_backdoor\\_revolution\\_pdx\\_pe.html](http://www.oregonlive.com/hg/index.ssf/2018/01/adu_backdoor_revolution_pdx_pe.html)
- » <https://openhousing.net/portlands-1-599-new-granny-flats-mapped-4e15d29da274>

### **Examples in Action**

- » <http://missingmiddlehousing.com>

While not explicitly calling their efforts Missing Middle, a couple of smaller cities in Oregon have, through reducing minimum lot sizes, parking requirements and some other rules, encouraged more compact, old-style, and new innovative housing types. These include Ashland and Forest Grove, Oregon.

On Bainbridge Island, Washington, a temporary demonstration zoning code resulted in a number of exemplary missing middle housing developments. Several provisions were particularly effective, including reduced parking requirements. Interestingly, the demonstration provisions were established to promote mixed-use development, but commercial uses were not required.

### **Amend multi-dwelling zones to permit smaller single-dwelling forms**

One way to introduce so-called “missing middle” housing types, and ensure that they are integrated into neighborhoods (rather than segregated), is to amend multidwelling zones. It is often easier to introduce clustered and detached single dwellings into multi dwelling zones, which is why it is recommended as a first step. New housing types can be piloted in multidwelling zones and later introduced into single dwelling zones. These new housing types promote homeownership in areas that are dominated by rentals and a single type of housing (stacked flats or apartments).

In 2010, Milwaukie, Oregon, undertook a number of residential zoning code amendments. Goals of the project were “to ensure that every new residential building in Milwaukie is a good neighbor; to respond to changing housing and demographic needs; and to streamline and clarify existing regulations.” Strategically, Milwaukie’s amendments focused on allowing rowhouses and cottage clusters in zones that already allowed apartments.

### **Amend single dwelling zones to permit smaller lots, and clustered or attached single dwellings**

Many of the old-fashioned types of clustered and attached housing, such as cottage courtyards and duplexes, can be introduced into single dwelling zones, especially when they are similar in size to the existing detached dwellings. Duplexes are often no larger than a mid-sized detached house, for example. These new housing types provide affordable rental options in single dwelling neighborhoods.

The TGM-funded report, “Character-Compatible, Space-Efficient Housing Options for Single-Dwelling Neighborhoods” published in 2016, details housing types that “support higher population densities in single-family neighborhoods in ways that maintain neighborhood character and increase housing options.” The housing types studied include: Cottage clusters, internal division of larger homes, corner duplexes, and accessory dwelling units.

#### **Examples in Action**

- » <https://www.milwaukieoregon.gov/planning/demographic-trends-and-housing-choices>
- » <https://www.milwaukieoregon.gov/planning/residential-development-standards-update-project>

#### **Examples in Action**

- » <http://www.oregon.gov/LCD/TGM/docs/SpaceEfficientHousingReport.pdf>

## Seek assistance for code amendments from the State of Oregon Transportation Growth Management (TGM) Code Assistance program

The TGM Code Assistance program provides community-specific help to local governments to identify and update regulations that promote efficient land use and transportation.

Code assistance projects can be undertaken in one or two phases: an initial assessment of the current land development regulations, and then preparation of code amendments for consideration by local decision-makers. The Code Assistance program contracts directly with consultants to provide assistance to local governments. Local governments are not required to provide cash or in-kind match, although we expect local staff to assist with meetings and other logistical support.

### Examples in action

» <http://www.oregon.gov/LCD/TGM/Pages/codeassistance.aspx>

# Appendix

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## **BACKGROUND AND DEMOGRAPHICS**

- A. Zoning Code Assessment
- B. North Plains Demographic Data 2017
- C. North Plains Infographics
- D. North Plains Development Studies

## **PRESENTATIONS**

- E. Workshop Presentation
- F. Focus Group Presentation
- G. Stakeholder Presentation
- H. City Council Presentation

## **OTHER DOCUMENTS REFERRED TO**

- I. Chapin, Ross. *Pocket Neighborhoods*. Newtown, CT: The Taunton Press, 2011.
- J. ECONorthwest. "City of North Plains Housing Needs Analysis." Draft Report, May 2017.
- K. Elliott, Donald L. *A Better Way to Zone*. Washington DC: Island Press, 2008.
- L. Spevak, Eli & Kovacs, Madeline. "Character-Compatible, Space-Efficient Housing Options for Single-Dwelling Neighborhoods." *DEQ and TGM*, May 2016.